

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A system and method for authoring and playback of multimedia content together with sharing, interconnecting and navigating the content using a computer network is disclosed. Creation, presentation and sharing of multimedia content and applications takes place within an active authoring environment, where data is always "live," and any piece of content can be played alongside any other piece of content at any time. In this environment, there are no formal delineations between one "presentation" and another based on such things as file boundaries, other data storage constructs or the like. Instead, any piece of content can potentially be part of the "current" presentation at any time simply by being "started." As a result, three factors become critically important: (1) the framework in which content is organized, stored and distributed; (2) the control mechanisms by which content is played and presented, and (3) as with any authoring system, the methods and means by which users create and edit content. In each of these areas, the present invention makes significant innovations which are highly complementary, resulting in a new type of software application that seamlessly integrates authoring, playback and networking in an active, shared, rich media environment optimized for personal communications.

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